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17 December 1952

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Reference Systems (Study on Overt Sources)

PARTICIPANTS:



Mr. James Q. Reber

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1. The OCD inventory of reference systems which was requested at a previous meeting (re the [redacted] paper), was examined. A complete inventory of devices for the storage and recovery of intelligence materials was determined to include:

a. The projects submitted in the paper prepared by OCD on machines now in development and new ideas; and

b. The OCD Guide, which it is understood is being revised for publication in February. (A list of functional services, to appear in the next CIA phone book, will supplement this Guide)

2. While it was the consensus that, as a short-term aid, the OCD Guide was of great assistance, the preparation of a list of specialized bibliographic aids which have already been produced by OCD would also be extremely useful, both to the Research Offices and to OCD reference personnel. It was further recognized that there are limitations on the extent to which the Agency can go, to provide the researcher with complete bibliographic service at his desk, and that a point will be reached at which further efforts to streamline and mechanically control this process could become so complicated that the funds and personnel required to serve researchers would create an impossible burden. It was admitted that this point had not yet been reached.

3. Especial emphasis was placed upon the prospect of immediately improving the situation through OCD beefing-up the reference service and the Research Offices (with the assistance of OTR) undertaking a more systematic program of educating researchers and controlling research. thru

4. It was understood that the next meeting with respect to the recovery of materials will be after the first of the year and will devote itself to what has been called the "long-term aspects" of this problem. The Chair understands this to mean, in fact, a fuller explanation of the technical aspects and probabilities of success among the various mechanical recovery devices which have either been launched or are under

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